Obesity: Is the Food & Beverage Industry Part of the Problem or Part of the Solution?

For

57th Reciprocal Meat Conference
University of Kentucky

June 22, 2004

Richard Elder, Senior Director
International Food Information Council (IFIC)
and IFIC Foundation
International Food Information Council (IFIC) and IFIC Foundation

**Mission:** To communicate science-based information on food safety and nutrition issues to health professionals, journalists, educators and government officials.

Primarily supported by the broad-based food, beverage and agricultural industries.
IFIC Foundation Web Site

ific.org
IFIC Foundation’s Food Insight

• 45,000 circulation
• 7% international
• 6,000 media
10 Tips to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for You

A Partnership Project:
American Dietetic Association
International Food Information Council Foundation
President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

For kids aged 9-15 years old

Released in 1995.
1998

OBESITY... The Epidemic

A Call To ACTION!
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1990
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)

[Map showing obesity trends across the U.S., with states color-coded to represent percentages of adults with BMI ≥30.]
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1991
(*BMI \geq 30, or \sim 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1992
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1993
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1994
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1995
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
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BRFSS, 1996
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BRFSS, 1997
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
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BRFSS, 1999
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Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 2000
(*BMI ≥30, or ~30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 2001
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults

BRFSS, 2002

(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Today

- Over 64% of U.S. adults overweight
- More than 120 million adults are overweight or obese
- Major risk factor for heart disease, diabetes, some cancers
- Estimated 400,000 obesity-related deaths/year
- Economic costs nearly $117 billion/year
Today: An Obesity Epidemic

“Obesity is quickly catching up to tobacco as the leading actual cause of death.”

Julie Gerberding, Director,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
### Actual Causes of Death in the United States (1990 and 2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual Cause</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>400,00</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>435,00</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor diet and physical activity</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol consumption</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>85,000</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microbial agents</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic agents</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicle</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43,000</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual behavior</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illicit drug use</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Persons with Diagnosed Diabetes, United States, 1980-2000

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003
Obesity: A Global Issue
The Rising Rate of Childhood Obesity is Alarming

July 2000
Trends in Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in U.S. Children, NHANES

Source: *JAMA*. 2002; 288:1723-1727
Childhood Overweight

• The number of overweight children in the U.S. is up 35% since 1991

• 30% of children are overweight or at risk for overweight

• 60% of overweight children ages 5 to 10 have at least one risk factor for heart disease

• “Overweight is the most common health problem facing U.S. children.” Journal of the American Medical Association, December 12, 2001

• “Once an obese youngster develops diabetes, he or she will never get rid of it. That’s a lot more irreversible than a smoking addiction.” Fortune, February 2003
“Because of increasing rates of obesity,...We may see the first generation that will be less healthy and have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.”

Surgeon General Richard Carmona
Who’s Concerned About the Obesity Issue?

- Media
- Health and Science Communities
- Government
- Advocacy Groups
- The Food and Beverage Industry
- Consumers
Trends in Obesity-Related Media Coverage

Note: Figures represent International Food Information Council Foundation (IFIC) tracking of U.S. and International (English-speaking) wire reports and print articles on the issue and do not necessarily reflect the true number of stories.
OBESITY: The U.S. Health Professional Perspective

**American Cancer Society** *(ACS Press Release)*

“Overweight and obesity are associated with increased risk for cancers of the breast (among postmenopausal women), colon, endometrium, esophagus, gall bladder, pancreas, and kidney.”

**American Dietetic Association** *(ADA Press Release)*

"ADA's Board of Directors has identified five nutrition and health areas of special concern to dietetics professionals and the American public. Obesity -- especially among children -- was prioritized as the most important."

**American Heart Association** *(AHA Prevention II: Obesity, A Worldwide Epidemic Related to Heart Disease and Stroke)*

“Obesity is now a world health problem with increasing incidence and prevalence in every continent. Although genes in part predict weight gain and obesity, the impact of the environment is much stronger.”

**American Public Health Association** *(APHA Web site)*

“Preventing obesity in our children is one of the most important public health issues facing the nation today.”

**American Academy of Pediatrics** *(AAP Policy Statement)*

“The dramatic increase in the prevalence of childhood overweight and its resultant comorbidities are associated with significant health and financial burdens, warranting strong and comprehensive prevention efforts.”
Obesity: The Global Public Health Perspective

WHO Technical Report Series No. 916 3/03

Ratified May 2004
Surgeon General Call to Action
December 2001

The Surgeon General’s Call To Action
To Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity 2001

Government is Acting!
Obesity and the Federal Government

- Surgeon General’s Call to Action
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Division of Physical Activity and Prevention
  - Division of Adolescent and School Health
  - Youth Media Campaign (Verbnow.com)
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Congress

Obesity and the States

- 179 Bills
Department of Health & Human Services

- Surgeon General’s Call to Action – 12/01
- HealthierUS Initiative
  - Prevention focus
  - Obesity and diabetes
- President’s Council on Physical Fitness & Sports
  - New Council, Web site, and Awards
- Public Service Advertising Campaign
  - “Healthier Lifestyles and Disease Prevention”
    - www.smallstep.gov
- Food & Drug Administration Strategic Plan
- NIH Obesity Research Strategy
  - Dialogue with food and beverage companies
US Department of Agriculture

- Dietary Guidelines – under review
  - Downward revision of recommended calorie intake
- Food Guide Pyramid – under review
- Healthy Eating Index
- School Meals
  - National school lunch program
  - School breakfast program
  - Special milk program
- Women, Infants & Children (W.I.C.)
US Department of Agriculture

“The evidence tells us we need to do more to help consumers understand how they can make healthier decisions.”

Ann Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
February 19, 2004
“The bottom line is, we’ve got to do something to get a behavioral change. Everyone recognizes that we do have issues regarding caloric consumption.”

Eric Hentges, Executive Director of the USDA’s Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA)

Steering Committee

Alliance for Retired Americans
American Cancer Society
American Dietetic Association
American Heart Association
American Public Health Association
Association of State and Territorial Chronic Disease Program Directors
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Health Promotion and Public Health Education
Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors

Center for Science in the Public Interest
Susan Foerster, MPH, RD
National Association of Sport and Physical Education
Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Jeff Sunderlin
United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association

Plus… 250 Alliance Members from national, state and local organizations!
Obesity

- Policies to Reduce Obesity
- Wallet to Waistline: The Hidden Costs of Super Sizing
- CSPI to Urge Taxes on Junk Foods to Fund Health Campaigns
- CSPI's Nine Weeks to a Perfect Diet
- Nutrition Experts and Diet-book Authors Urge Government to Test Weight-loss Plans
- Obesity Epidemic "Deadly" Result of Societal Shifts in the 20th Century
- Obesity in America: Inevitable?
- Rating the Diet Books
- Ten Tips for Staying Lean
- The Pressure to Eat
New Players...

- Trial Lawyers
- Wall Street Analysts
- Economists
- Insurance Industry
“Legal Approaches to the Obesity Epidemic”

Northeastern University School of Law,
June 21-23, 2003
Selected Speaker Topics

- “Limits of Influencing Behavior Through Education”
- “Protecting Consumers with Regulation”
- “The Intersection of Behavior, Environment and Health”
- “Marketing Strategies that Influence Obesity”
- “Regulatory Approaches to Changing the Food Environment”
- “Litigation Approaches to Changing the Food Environment”
“The rise in obesity to “epidemic” proportions is a serious concern to the food industry, in our view. Given the human and financial cost of the disease, we believe governments cannot ignore the call of national and international health organizations to act.”

—J.P. Morgan Report, European Equity Research, April 2003
Obesity and Healthcare Costs

- Healthcare costs already increasing
- Overweight and obesity increasing
- Overweight & obesity linked to chronic disease
- Aging population
- Current costs estimated at $117 billion
“If people want to weigh 200 pounds, then that’s their choice, but ultimately, if the taxpayer is paying for those choices, certainly, in my mind, that’s where the justification for government involvement comes from.”

—Eric Finkelstein, Health Economics Researcher, RTI International
Prevention and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity:
Toward a Roadmap for Advocacy and Action

August 14 – 15, 2003
Washington, D.C.
New Wrinkle...

Addiction
Obesity

A Complex Issue
The Root Cause of Obesity Is Simple

An imbalance between calories-in and calories-out

But...
...the social factors that contribute to the imbalance are complex:

- Changing food habits
- Declining physical activity in the home and in schools
- Increasing sedentary habits
- Changes in the physical environment
### Suggested Causes of Obesity in Media Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food/Nutrition</th>
<th>Physical Activity</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental influence</td>
<td>Parental influence</td>
<td>Latch-key kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of food</td>
<td>No PE in schools</td>
<td>Genetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexpensive food</td>
<td>Personal safety</td>
<td>Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good-tasting food</td>
<td>Community design</td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft drinks/Snacks</td>
<td>Computer games</td>
<td>Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low calcium intake</td>
<td>TV watching</td>
<td>Low incomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary fats/carbohydrates</td>
<td>Automobile culture</td>
<td>High incomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>caloric intake</strong></td>
<td><strong>caloric intake</strong></td>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large portion sizes</td>
<td></td>
<td>A virus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We are Consuming More Calories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Calories/Day</th>
<th>US Gov’t Recomm</th>
<th>2000 vs. Recomm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>2450</td>
<td>2618</td>
<td>+168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>+335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Adults</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>+16.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who is Receiving the Most Blame?
The Food Industry!
What Is Being Targeted?

- Soft Drinks
- Fast Foods
- Cookies, Candy, Chips
- Large portions
- High-calorie/low-nutrient foods
What’s Being Said

“The soft drink industry is bidding for our children and we are selling them.”

Division Head
Children’s Hospital, Los Angeles
What’s Being Said

“Fast foods are weapons of mass destruction.”

*Quoted from multiple sources*
What’s Being Said

“60% of ads directed to kids during Saturday mornings are for food...this is a national conspiracy against children!”

Former Chair, Committee on Sports Medicine
American Academy of Pediatrics
Solutions to the Obesity Epidemic Have Already Been Proposed

- Heavily food-based
- Heavily disincentive-based
Suggested remedies include:

- Restrictions on advertising and vending
- Restrictions in schools
- Taxes on high calorie, low nutrient foods
To Be Fair – Physical Inactivity Also Contributes to Obesity

Interestingly, taxes and restrictions are not widely proposed here
What is the Role/Responsibility of the Physically Inactivity Industry?

- Television
- Computers
- Videogames
What’s Being Said

“Is it the Individual or is it the Environment?”
Some people say obesity is a private issue people need to deal with on their own. Others say it is a public health issue that society needs to help solve. Which comes close to how you feel?

- Private issue people need to deal with on their own: 48%
- Public health issue that society needs to help solve: 47%
- Don't know: 5%

Harvard Forums on Health Poll
Obesity as a Public Health Issue, May – June 2003
• In 1999, overweight and obesity began to emerge as an important public health problem
• Consumers need practical, relevant tools and information to help them adopt healthy eating and physical activity behaviors
• ...but where do we start and what is IFIC’s role?
ACTIVATE

A consumer communications outreach program designed to deliver information to children and their families that will assist in achieving healthy lifestyles through regular physical activity and good nutrition.
The Power of Partnerships

Six leading health, food and science organizations:

- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American College of Sports Medicine
- American Dietetic Association
- International Food Information Council Foundation
- International Life Sciences Institute
- National Recreation and Park Association

All bring unique knowledge, skills and resources.
Unrestricted Grants From the Food and Beverage Industry

- The Coca-Cola Company
- H.J Heinz Foundation
- Hershey Foods Corporation
- Keebler Company
- Kellogg Company
- Kraft Foods
- Masterfoods USA

- McDonald’s Corporation
- National Confectioners Association
- The Procter & Gamble Company
- PepsiCo, Inc.
- Sara Lee Corporation
- Snack Food Association
A Strategic Approach

- Targeted to kids and their families (home, school, community)
- Prevention oriented
- Balance physical activity and nutrition
- Research driven
- Consensus science
- Credibility
- Non-commercial
Introducing...
Promotes Healthy Eating

InnerG

Recipe Roundup
Promotes Physical Activity

Move Mixer

Wet Head Games

Fitness Challenge

Scavenger Hunt
Parents’ Section

Bright Papers for Parents

About Kiadnetic.com for Parents

Our philosophy is that children learn healthy eating habits and healthy lifestyle behaviors at a young age. Parents wish to learn more about healthy eating and lifestyle habits.

Parents can involve their children in health-related activities. These activities can be fun and educational for both parents and children. The following are some tips and tricks to help you encourage healthy eating habits in your family.

1. Set a good example for your children by eating a balanced diet and exercising regularly.
2. Provide healthy snacks and meals for your children.
3. Encourage your children to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.
4. Make sure your children have enough fluids throughout the day.
5. Limit the amount of sugary drinks and snacks your children consume.
6. Teach your children how to read food labels and choose healthy options.
8. Make sure your children get enough exercise and physical activity every day.
10. Limit screen time and encourage outdoor activities.

Ask An Expert

Q: How much physical activity should my child get each day?

A: At least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day. This can be achieved through a combination of activities such as running, swimming, jumping rope, and playing sports.

Q: Why is it important for kids to be physically active?

A: Physical activity is important for children's overall health and well-being. It helps them develop strong bones and muscles, improves cardiovascular health, and reduces the risk of obesity, diabetes, and other chronic diseases. Additionally, regular physical activity can improve children's mental health and reduce stress levels.

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Comprehensive List of Additional Online Resources

- General health and nutrition
- Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Obesity and overweight
- Eating disorders
- Physical activity
- Child and family psychology
- Food safety
Progress Since Launch

- 1.5 million visitors
- 500 Links from health/government/community organizations
- Rated “Among the Best” by Tufts Nutrition Navigator
- “Overall, Kidnetic is an excellent template for health promotion efforts on the Web targeting youth.”—Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, May/June 2003
- “Kidnetic.com is a well conceived, eye-popping site that aims to get young people moving and eating right through a series of interactive games, recipes, and an on-screen “buddy.”—The Lancet, August 16, 2003
- Formal evaluation completed
Kidnetic.com Evaluation

- Majority of kids and parents who participated in the activities on Kidnetic.com believed they were fun
- About four in ten parents and kids said they are extremely likely to visit Kidnetic.com again
- Almost half of parents and kids are extremely or very likely to recommend Kidnetic.com to other kids
Reaching Out to Community-Based Organizations

• Healthy lifestyle lessons & activities
• Content from Kidnetic.com
• Leader’s Guide
• Pilot testing in community settings
• Downloadable from Internet at no cost
• Dissemination in 2004
Kidnetic.com
Leader’s Guide

module #6
FRUITS & VEGETABLES - GIMME 5!

Many kids fall short on eating recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. The Quick Start Ideas and Activity Action Plan in this module will help you to:

- Explain to kids why fruits and vegetables are not just good for them, but help them feel good and look good, too.
- Teach kids how many servings of fruits and vegetables they need each day and compare to how many they eat.
- Encourage kids to try tasty new or familiar fruits and vegetables.

ACTIVITY ACTION PLAN

WHAT YOU NEED

- Totally Weird Ways to (Fruit and) Veg Out Bright Paper—review for background plus one copy for each child to take home.
- “Finger-friendly” samples of fruits and/or vegetables such as grapes, apple slices, baby carrots, broccoli florets. If possible, include some “unusual” ones that are in season such as kiwi or mango cubes, yellow, orange or red bell pepper slices, or tiny “grape” tomatoes.
- Copies of the Fruits and Veggies Taste Test handout for each child to “taste” the fruit and vegetable samples.
- Small paper cups or plates for samples, napkins or paper towels.

OPTIONAL: Flip chart, board or paper to record kids’ ideas.

WHAT TO DO

Use the Talking Points and Discussion Questions below to discuss how fruits and vegetables are great for you and taste great, too. Refer to the Totally Weird Ways to (Fruit and) Veg Out Bright Paper for additional background information. Following the discussion, pass out fruit/vegetables samples; explain the Take Home Activity.

TALKING POINTS/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- I bet you all know that fruits and vegetables are good for your health. Who can tell me why?
- They contain vitamins and minerals that you need to grow up healthy and strong and to look good and feel good, too. They also contain fiber, which is good for you, too.

Quick Start Ideas

Hand out and review the Totally Weird Ways to (Fruit and) Veg Out Bright Paper. Ask each child to pick an idea to try at home.

Do the talking points and discussion without the fruit and vegetable samples.

Provide a simple fruit or veggie snack such as grapes, apple slices or baby carrots. While the kids are eating, ask them why fruits and vegetables are good for them and to name their favorite fruit and vegetable.

Ask kids to name or write down as many fruits and vegetables as they can that begin with each letter of the alphabet.
Why Should the Food Industry Care About the Obesity Issue?

- #1 public health problem
- #1 kids health problem
- Impacts current and future consumers
- Will get worse before it gets better
- Food industry being blamed
- Clear threats to marketing practices
ACTIVATE is One Piece of the Puzzle
The Obesity Problem is Complex

- Public Policy
- Consumer Advocacy Groups
- Media
- Health Educators
- Food and Beverage Industry
- Scientific Research
- Consumers
- Medical and Health Profession
- Public Health
- Health Insurance

The Obesity Problem is Complex.
For More Information, Contact:

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Suite 430
Washington, DC  20036

Phone    202-296-6540
E-Mail    obesity@ific.org